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ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF PERIODIC AND GENUINE ELECTIONS

Cuba: amendments to draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.56

1. Delete the second to fifth preambular paragraphs and replace them by the following:

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1/ which provides that everyone has the right to take part in the government of his or her country, directly or through freely chosen representatives, that everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his or her country, that the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government, and that this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures,

Noting that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 2/ provides that every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives, to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors, and to have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his or her country,

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

1/ Resolution 217 A (III).

2/ See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

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Condemning the system of apartheid and any other denial or abridgement of the right to vote on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Considering that the tricameral parliament established under the system of apartheid is a gross violation of the principle of universal and equal suffrage and has been overwhelmingly rejected by the international community,

Recalling that all States enjoy sovereign equality and that each State has the right freely to choose and develop its political, social, economic and cultural systems,

Recognizing that there is no single political system or electoral method that is equally suited to all nations and their people,

Recalling its resolutions 43/157 of 8 December 1988 and 44/146 of 15 December 1989,

2. Delete operative paragraphs 1 to 4 and replace them by the following:

1. Underscores the significance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which establish that the authority to govern shall be based on the will of the people, as expressed in periodic and genuine elections;

2. Stresses its conviction that periodic and genuine elections are a necessary and indispensable element of sustained efforts to protect the rights and interests of the governed and that, as a matter of practical experience, the right of everyone to take part in the government of his or her country is a crucial factor in the effective enjoyment by all of a wide range of other human rights and fundamental freedoms, embracing political, economic, social and cultural rights;

3. Declares that determining the will of the people requires an electoral process that provides an equal opportunity for all citizens to become candidates and put forward their political views, individually and in co-operation with others within the constitution and national legislation;

4. Recognizes that the efforts of the international community to enhance the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections should not call into question each State's sovereign right freely to choose and develop its political, social, economic and cultural systems, whether or not they conform to the preferences of other States;

5. Underscores the duty of each member of the international community to respect the decisions taken by other States in freely choosing and developing their electoral institutions;

6. Reaffirms that apartheid must be abolished, that the systematic denial or abridgement of the right to vote on the grounds of race or colour is a gross violation of human rights and an affront to the conscience and dignity of mankind, and that the right to participate in a political system based on common and equal citizenship and universal franchise is essential for the exercise of the principle of periodic and genuine elections;

7. Rejects the tricameral parliament established under the system of apartheid as an abhorrent expression of a fundamentally oppressive and flagrantly inhuman political system;

8. Calls upon the Commission on Human Rights, at its forty-seventh session, to continue its consideration of appropriate ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections, in the context of full respect for the sovereignty of Member States, and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council;

3. Renumber former operative paragraph 5 as paragraph 9.

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